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RESOURCES

IN



# ALASKA

INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 2

REVISED

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FRED A. SEATON, SECRETARY

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

WARD WOZLEY, DIRECTOR

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ACCENT

ON

ALASKA

INTEREST in Alaska has been greatly stimulated during recent years through recognition of its importance as an outpost for national defense; through its discovery by large numbers of servicemen and civilians during the war; and through altered concepts of Alaska's remoteness and vastness in an air-minded world. Due to the advancement of air transportation and construction of the Alaska Highway, the Territory no longer seems so remote from the States.

Many people now include Alaska in their travel plans. Some expect to pay it a visit. Others will stay.

Those who visit will be richly rewarded, for the Territory offers a wealth of scenic attractions seldom surpassed in grandeur and variety.

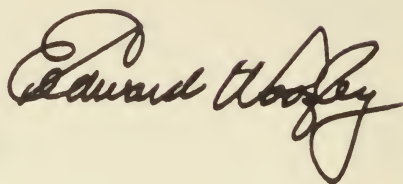
To those seeking a permanent home, Alaska presents a great challenge. In the abundance of Alaska's natural resources—her lands, her forests, her minerals, her fish and game, and her water power—there are unsurpassed opportunities.

Yet the success of settlement cannot be taken for granted simply because these resources exist. A pioneering spirit, bolstered by all the knowledge and resources at the settler's command, is essential to successful settlement in the Territory.

Over 80 percent of the area of Alaska is public domain under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management. This bulletin is presented to the public to provide some basic information on the Territory—information of value to a prospective settler—and to explain how public land may be acquired or leased under the public land laws as applied to Alaska.

Additional information regarding the public lands is available on request to the Area Administrator, Bureau of Land Management, Juneau, Alaska; the managers of the Land Offices at Anchorage or Fairbanks, Alaska; or the Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington 25, D. C.

For other sources of information, the reader should consult the governmental directory at the end of this Bulletin.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Edward Hooley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

*Director,  
Bureau of Land Management.  
May 1957*

## BRIEF HISTORY

OF

ALASKA

ALASKA derives its name from an English corruption of the native word "al-ay-ek-sa," probably meaning "the great land" or "mainland."

The region now known as Alaska was discovered by a Danish captain of the Russian Navy, Vitus Bering, on July 16, 1741. Russian traders and trappers soon entered the country, under the initial leadership of Grigor Shelekof, and through their activities other nations became interested in this region. Spanish expeditions in 1774 and 1775 visited the southeastern shore and in 1778 the English explorer, Capt. James Cook, made extensive surveys of the coast for the British Government. The first settlement was made by the Russians under Shelekof at Three Saints, on Kodiak Island, on August 3, 1784, and in 1804 the Russian-American Co. founded Sitka, making it the seat of Government in 1805. The leader of this easternmost extension of the new Russia was Alexander Andreevich Baranof, a Russian merchant employed by Shelekof.

In 1799 the trade and regulation of the Russian possessions in America were given over to the Russian-American Co. for a term of 20 years, a contract which was twice renewed for similar periods.

In 1821 Russia attempted to exclude foreign navigators from the Bering Sea and the Pacific coast of her possessions. This caused a controversy with the United States and Great Britain. The question was settled by a treaty with the United States in 1824 and one with Great Britain in 1825, by which an attempt was made to fix permanently the boundaries of the Russian possessions in America.

In March 1867, Alaska was purchased by the United States for the sum of 7,200,000 dollars in gold. American history of the Territory of Alaska dates from 4 a. m., March 30, 1867, when the Treaty of Purchase was signed at Washington by Secretary of State William H. Seward, for the United States, and Baron de Stoeckl for Russia. By this treaty, ratified by the Senate



and proclaimed by President Andrew Johnson on June 20, 1867, the United States acquired an area of approximately 586,400 square miles. The formal transfer of sovereignty took place at Sitka, the Russian capital, on October 18, 1867. Under the terms of the treaty, all natives of Alaska acquired full rights of American citizenship.

Secretary Seward, who had negotiated this treaty, was severely criticized for the purchase of what was referred to as "Seward's folly," and "Seward's ice-box." For many years the Federal Government took little interest in the development of the Territory. Finally in 1884 a civil government was established for Alaska through a bill approved by President Arthur.

The discovery of gold in the Klondike in 1896 brought an influx of settlers, and thereby created need for additional laws. Congress in 1889 and 1900 provided for a code of civil and criminal law, and in 1903 passed a homestead act. The

act of May 7, 1906, empowered Alaska to elect a Delegate to Congress.

The Territory of Alaska, with Juneau as the capital, was finally created in 1912 with a legislature of two houses elected every two years by popular vote, and a Governor appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a term of four years. The legislature meeting biennially in odd years, consists of 40 members, 24 in the lower house and 16 in the Senate.

The Delegate to Congress, who has a seat in the House of Representatives and membership on committees dealing with Territorial affairs but no vote, is elected every two years.

Justice is administered by a Federal District Court having four divisions with judges sitting at Juneau, Nome, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. These courts enforce both Federal and Territorial laws. There are also local courts in incorporated towns.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

ON

ALASKA

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### AREA, CLIMATE, AND TOPOGRAPHY

THE AREA of Alaska is 586,400 square miles, which is roughly equal to one-fifth the area of the United States. It has a north-south and east-west extent almost as great as that of the United States, when its peninsulas and other extremities are considered. In this vast region there are wide differences from place to place in climate, land forms, and soils.

The old popular misconception of Alaska as a forbidding land of ice and snow has been largely dispelled. Indeed, there is some danger now that the swing of popular opinion may go too far in the other direction. While it is true that at certain seasons and in certain localities higher temperatures occur than would normally be expected in those latitudes, the interior of Alaska generally has a climate resembling in many respects that of the northern portion of our central States. Along the coasts and in south-

eastern Alaska, average annual temperatures are much higher and the winters are warmer. Only on the Arctic Slope, and possibly on some parts of the Aleutian Islands, is the climate so rigorous or unattractive as to discourage general settlement.

Most of Alaska consists of rugged mountains, high broad plateaus, and extensive swampy tundra plains. These land forms profoundly influence the climate, vegetation, and the distribution of population. As might be expected nearly all of such land is unsuitable for settlement. The areas of fairly level land best suited for settlement comprise the glacial outwash and morainic deposits in the large coastal valleys of South Central Alaska and the drier lower slopes of the broad interior valleys.

The frequently quoted figure of 65,000 square miles of potential agricultural lands is now regarded as an overly optimistic approximation. It is believed that from 4,000

## ALASKA

## Climatic summary

District	Station	Temperature				Killing frost average dates				Average precipitation														
		Length of January record	January average	July average	Maximum	Minimum	Length of record	Last in spring	First in fall	Growing season <sup>1</sup>	Days	Yr.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Southeastern	Annex Creek	21	22.7	54.9	84	-12	May 6	Sept. 30	147	147	22	9.04	7.85	6.20	5.65	5.14	4.33	6.21	10.22	13.42	16.61	13.41	9.36	107.44
	Bell Island	9	29.0	58.2	90	-4	May 8	Oct. 28	173	173	9.10	6.83	5.11	7.12	6.64	5.33	5.49	5.71	7.19	11.26	15.11	11.78	110.06	
	Haines	15	22.9	57.6	90	-15	May 20	Sept. 19	122	155	5.42	5.14	4.76	3.34	3.64	2.01	1.58	1.90	2.27	4.98	10.24	7.74	7.15	56.43
	Juneau	40	27.5	56.6	89	-15	Apr. 28	Oct. 17	172	140	7.18	5.63	5.41	4.76	3.46	3.95	5.03	7.33	10.15	11.18	9.10	7.61	83.25	
	Kassan										9.21	7.59	6.32	6.22	5.53	3.76	3.68	4.44	6.30	10.17	10.39	10.27	84.00	
	Ketchikan	28	32.6	57.5	96	-8	May 5	Oct. 17	165	28	13.71	11.63	12.20	10.79	8.31	6.55	8.24	11.51	12.14	20.13	19.74	15.94	150.89	
	Petersburg	8	28.5	55.2	81	-5	May 18	Sept. 4	129	9	8.50	9.85	7.29	6.39	5.79	4.49	5.31	6.94	11.97	15.32	12.79	11.81	106.45	
	Seclusion Harbor	6	30.3	55.8	92	-2	May 6	Oct. 9	156	40	11.89	9.08	8.20	6.68	5.49	4.14	4.70	6.32	12.45	17.45	15.40	12.33	110.13	
	Sitka	40	32.4	54.9	87	-5	May 10	Oct. 16	159	40	7.84	6.78	5.97	5.58	4.15	3.36	4.26	7.02	10.33	12.64	10.07	9.10	87.13	
	Skagway	32	21.1	57.7	92	-19	May 27	Sept. 15	111	30	2.03	1.40	1.30	1.46	.89	.92	1.45	1.91	3.52	5.02	4.14	2.79	76.85	
Pacific coast	Tree Point	9	34.1	54.4	86	-3	May 22	Sept. 23	124	9	10.85	7.23	6.97	6.47	5.46	5.66	5.72	5.41	8.38	12.69	13.45	11.38	99.67	
	View Cove	7	35.1	56.0	88	-5	Apr. 25	Nov. 3	192	22	7.17	7.42	12.17	12.36	10.97	9.50	6.65	9.00	27.23	12.58	18.37	12.57	19.18	155.52
	Wrangell	23	29.0	58.2	92	-6	Apr. 26	Oct. 12	169	27	7.71	7.25	5.43	4.89	4.38	3.55	4.49	5.31	7.23	12.51	21.11	17.79	8.59	82.95
	Cordova	36	27.2	54.8	87	-19	May 8	Oct. 4	149	40	4.66	4.73	3.83	3.93	6.03	4.91	3.00	5.00	5.43	7.55	7.52	6.09	61.48	
	Kodiak	36	29.8	54.3	85	-12	May 8	Oct. 12	160	40	4.66	4.73	3.83	3.93	6.03	4.91	3.00	5.00	5.43	7.55	7.52	6.09	61.48	
	Seward	26	22.4	55.3	82	-20	May 18	Sept. 27	132	26	4.46	4.91	3.34	4.25	3.39	2.42	2.83	5.92	9.60	11.06	14.85	6.70	73.73	
	Valdez	27	19.1	52.3	83	-24	May 23	Sept. 16	116	15	3.87	4.92	4.22	2.94	3.52	6.88	4.22	3.16	3.46	3.66	7.43	3.75	4.62	94.03
	Whale Island	14	28.8	53.1	83	-9	June 3	Sept. 17	106	15	3.87	4.62	2.84	3.52	6.88	4.22	3.16	3.46	3.66	7.43	3.75	4.62	94.03	
	Yukutat	17	29.3	52.8	82	-5	May 9	Oct. 8	152	18	10.77	9.67	6.75	7.80	7.84	4.17	8.10	17.14	65.17	73.16	92.12	48.12	126.13	
	Atka	12	33.4	49.6						13	6.33	4.43	5.54	5.19	5.13	3.96	5.55	5.41	6.52	7.70	8.26	6.00	70.24	
Southern western	Dutch Harbor	22	32.2	51.3	80	-8	May 22	Oct. 14	145	18	5.80	5.24	5.01	4.02	4.41	2.74	1.92	2.35	5.21	7.33	5.71	7.03	56.77	
	St. Paul Island	27	25.2	45.8	94	-26	June 5	Oct. 10	127	36	2.26	1.61	1.87	1.36	1.52	1.39	2.73	3.25	3.47	3.32	2.94	2.22	27.94	
	Anchorage	22	11.2	57.0	92	-36	May 25	Sept. 12	110	22	8.65	6.69	5.57	3.39	.48	.54	1.63	2.64	2.49	2.08	1.66	.84	14.32	
	Bethel	15	8.3	54.5	90	-46	June 4	Sept. 5	93	15	1.10	.66	.87	.53	.69	1.15	2.32	3.97	3.30	2.15	.94	.18	17.96	
	Kennecott	24	4.5	52.4	80	-39	June 6	do	91	20	1.71	1.48	1.08	.65	.16	1.46	2.39	3.03	3.07	2.03	1.86	.84	21.60	
	Matanuska	19	12.6	57.7	91	-36			19	9.4	.80	6.61	.60	.47	.25	1.88	2.38	2.88	2.39	1.84	1.03	.18	13.61	
	Sustina	6	9.1	57.7	86	-27			16	1.74	.86	1.01	.94	.90	.62	1.09	1.87	2.88	2.39	1.84	1.03	.18	26.88	
	Talkeetna	19	7.6	58.0	90	-48	June 14	Aug. 25	72	18	1.81	1.98	1.97	.90	.96	1.63	3.64	5.13	4.40	4.02	1.87	1.70	30.03	
	Dillingham (near)	22	16.1	55.6	89	-41	June 19	Aug. 10	52	21	1.87	1.34	1.78	1.29	1.63	1.70	2.71	3.91	3.93	2.78	1.73	1.45	26.12	
	Bering Sea	Nome	32	3.4	49.8	84	-47			32	1.16	.83	.88	.64	.66	1.21	2.55	3.36	2.77	1.61	1.00	.42	11.39	
Teller	6	—	52.1	76	-55	June 9	Aug. 24	14	6	1.46	.60	.31	.79	.29	1.80	1.47	2.01	.53	.83	.83	.53	17.39		
White Mountain	16	2	54.1	89	-55	June 9	Aug. 24	76	14	.97	.68	.67	.27	.29	.96	2.10	2.84	3.45	.82	.69	.90	14.66		

Yukon Valley.....	241-20, 31 57.7	90-70	14	June 13	Aug. 6	54	25	77	84	70	36	85	1.32	2.11	2.02	1.55	1.11	883	84	13.10
Allakakei.....	37-21.0 59.3	92-66	20	May 29	Aug. 26	89	34	87	70	52	52	1.02	1.19	1.55	1.58	1.41	1.17	1.12	1.04	12.60
Dawson.....	34-11.6 60.0	90-66	20	June 1	Aug. 21	81	23	40	49	70	29	57	1.30	1.92	2.10	1.31	85	74	63	11.87
Fort Yukon.....	23-21.6 61.2	100-78	18	June 1	Aug. 21	81	23	40	49	70	29	57	1.30	1.92	2.10	1.31	85	74	63	11.87
Fort Yukon.....	33-11.1 56.5	93-58	22	May 31	Aug. 29	90	29	1.49	97	1.29	66	67	1.31	2.70	3.78	2.91	1.67	1.29	1.32	20.96
Hot Springs.....	9-11.1 58.3	88-70	15	June 9	Aug. 11	63	15	83	98	37	12	26	1.46	3.41	4.30	1.64	91	85	74	16.69
McKinley Park.....	16-1.0 57.3	89-54	15	June 9	Aug. 11	63	15	83	98	37	12	26	1.46	3.41	4.30	1.64	91	85	74	16.69
Nulato.....	13-7.5 57.5	90-62	15	June 9	Aug. 11	63	15	83	98	37	12	26	1.46	3.41	4.30	1.64	91	85	74	16.69
Ruby.....	6-7.5 57.5	90-62	15	June 9	Aug. 11	63	15	83	98	37	12	26	1.46	3.41	4.30	1.64	91	85	74	16.69
Tanana.....	37-12.5 58.3	91-76	21	June 3	Aug. 26	64	38	80	74	64	25	78	1.21	2.37	2.60	1.80	1.07	75	64	13.63
University Experiment Station.....	34-10.2 59.9	90-65	18	July 4	Aug. 26	64	38	80	74	64	25	78	1.21	2.37	2.60	1.80	1.07	75	64	13.63
Barrow.....	25-17.0 40.2	78-56	10	July 13	Sept. 14	83	6	94	24	26	13	15	26	83	74	46	59	32	27	4.34
Kotzebue.....	14-9.2 52.4	81-58	10	July 13	Sept. 14	83	6	94	24	26	13	15	26	83	74	46	59	32	27	4.34

<sup>1</sup> Length of growing season between average dates of last killing frost in spring and first in fall.

### Precipitation—Territorial Unit Values

[This tabulation gives the mean annual precipitation, 1907-38, for the southern and northern divisions of Alaska separately. The southern division consists of the southeastern, Pacific coast, and southwestern island districts; the northern division consists of the remainder of the Territory]

Precipitation for southern division			Precipitation for southern division			Precipitation for northern division			Precipitation for northern division			Precipitation for northern division		
Year	Mean	Year	Year	Mean	Year	Year	Mean	Year	Year	Mean	Year	Year	Mean	Year
1907	In. 65.41	1918	In. 96.79	93.54	1907	In. 13.59	1918	In. 15.58	1907	In. 13.59	1918	In. 15.58	1907	In. 13.59
1908	68.01	1919	80.78	92.91	1908	10.96	1919	15.70	1908	10.96	1919	15.70	1908	10.96
1909	63.87	1920	81.69	85.82	1909	10.15	1920	15.68	1909	10.15	1920	15.68	1909	10.15
1910	67.87	1921	83.23	79.54	1910	9.61	1921	14.23	1910	9.61	1921	14.23	1910	9.61
1911	67.71	1922	82.26	73.01	1911	11.22	1922	17.14	1911	11.22	1922	17.14	1911	11.22
1912	93.68	1923	91.29	81.78	1912	12.35	1923	14.96	1912	12.35	1923	14.96	1912	12.35
1913	84.58	1924	91.33	87.84	1913	9.83	1924	17.17	1913	9.83	1924	17.17	1913	9.83
1914	78.53	1925	85.62	91.97	1914	12.20	1925	17.24	1914	12.20	1925	17.24	1914	12.20
1915	100.96	1926	104.46	88.83	1915	16.31	1926	14.86	1915	16.31	1926	14.86	1915	16.31
1916	84.74	1927	83.49	102.75	1916	16.23	1927	12.90	1916	16.23	1927	12.90	1916	16.23
1917	105.18	1928	98.09		1917	13.95	1928	16.95	1917	13.95	1928	16.95	1917	13.95

Chart prepared by the U. S. Weather Bureau

to 5,000 square miles is more nearly correct. When the limiting criteria of soils, climate, and accessibility are applied, the maximum acreage suitable for agricultural settlement under present conditions is probably less than 1,000,000 acres.

## **FIRE ON PUBLIC DOMAIN**

The long hours of daylight and light rainfall which characterize the summers of Western and Interior Alaska, create a serious forest and range fire season from April through September each year. Forest fires have burned over an estimated 80 per cent of Alaska's domain forest lands during the past 60 years. A majority of the fires are man-caused, by abandoned camp fires, carelessly discarded cigarettes, land-clearing fires, etc. Lightning fires occur north and west of the Alaska Range.

The Bureau of Land Management maintains a small force of fire control personnel which is able to extend limited protection to the more heavily populated areas located along the Territorial highway system and areas within 150 miles by air from Anchorage and Fairbanks.

The Alaska Fire Control Act, as amended, carries penalties for allowing any fire burning on vegetated land in Alaska to escape control. All prospective residents or travelers in Alaska should exercise extreme care to prevent the occurrence of uncontrolled fires; they should contact Bureau of Land Management fire guards at stations located along the highways and ob-

tain copies of the fire laws. They should report all fires detected by them.

## **TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES**

Transportation to most of Alaska is by regularly scheduled airlines, or by car via the Alaska Highway. Passenger steamship service is available only to southeastern Alaska from Vancouver, B. C. Once in Alaska, many of the important settlement areas can be reached over the Territorial highway network. Most settlements in southeastern Alaska can be reached by air.

The Alaska Highway extends from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, about 1,600 miles to Fairbanks. If Anchorage is the destination, the distance from Dawson Creek is roughly 1,700 miles. Dawson Creek is about 500 miles from Edmonton, Alberta, about 1,500 from Seattle, and about 2,150 miles from Chicago. The highway was conceived and constructed as a military road and is paved only in Alaska. Automobile accessories, such as gas and oil, are available, and minor repairs may be obtained at reasonably short intervals along the highway. Fairly good camping and night accommodations are also available.

Persons who contemplate traveling to Alaska over the Alaska Highway should check with the proper Canadian authority as to requirements, restrictions, and road conditions. Travel over the highway usually involves the following conditions: snow, rain, and mud in the spring; dust in the summer; ice



and snow in the fall; and hard-packed snow and extreme subzero temperature in the winter. The Haines Cutoff Road is completed and is open to traffic during summer months. This shortens the overland route if the traveler goes by boat to Haines and enters Alaska via that road. It is about 685 miles from Haines to Fairbanks. Most interior Alaskan cities are interconnected by the Territorial highway system. The Anchorage-Seward Highway and the Sterling Highway are the backbone of a system which serves the Kenai Peninsula. The Glenn Highway extends northeasterly from Anchorage, crossing the Richardson Highway at Glennallen and connecting with the Alaska Highway at Tok Junction. The Richardson Highway follows the route of an old army wagon road from Valdez to Fairbanks. Two routes extend northerly out of Fairbanks to serve gold-producing areas. These include the Elliot Highway to Livengood and the Steese Highway to Circle. The Denali Highway is practically completed from Paxson on the Richardson to the famous Mt. McKinley National Park. This is the largest of all National parks and has been accessible only by train or plane. A secondary route into Canada is provided by the Taylor Highway which extends northeasterly from Forty Mile on the Alaska Highway to Dawson, Yukon Territory.

The majority of the primary highways have been paved, and paving will continue as conditions permit. The unpaved sections have a fine gravel surface which is usually

well graded and maintained in good driving condition throughout most of the year.

Regular plane service from Seattle brings Juneau and other southeastern points, as well as Anchorage and Fairbanks, within one day's travel of the United States. Air services radiate from the principal cities. Air transportation is extensively used in the Territory.

The Alaska Railroad, operated by the Department of the Interior, furnishes year-round freight and passenger service to all points on the railroad between the ports of Seward and the city of Fairbanks. Other inland transportation service is provided by small boats on many of the navigable streams. In the winter, dog teams are still used in the more isolated districts.

**POPULATION-SELECTED CITIES AND TOWNS**

In 1940 the population of Alaska was 72,524 and on April 1, 1950, the count was 128,643. The 1940-50 increase represents the greatest population growth rate in Alaska for any decade since the 1890-1900 gold rush decade. The rapid growth has continued, and by July 1, 1953 the Bureau of Census estimate was 205,000.

The 1950 census by city and town shows the following populations in each of the communities and areas listed :

	<i>1950 Census</i>
Anchorage	11, 254
Anchorage district	32, 060
Barrow	951
Bethel district	3, 895
Circle district	680

	<i>1950 Census</i>
Cordova	1, 165
Craig	374
Eagle	55
Fairbanks	5, 771
Fairbanks district	19, 409
Fort Yukon	446
Haines	338
Haines district	645
Homer	307
Hoonah	563
Hydaburg	353
Juneau	5, 956
Juneau district	8, 758
Ketchikan	5, 305
Ketchikan district	9, 455
Klawak	404
Kenai	321
Kodiak	1, 710
Kodiak district	6, 264
Kotzebue	623
Koyukuk	206
Mount McKinley district	343
Nenana	246
Nenana district	846
Nome	1, 876
Cape Nome district	5, 582
Nulato district	1, 332
Palmer	890
Petersburg	1, 619
Petersburg district	2, 310
Seldovia	437
Seldovia district	701
Seward	2, 114
Seward district	2, 708
Sitka	1, 985
Sitka district	4, 550
Skagway	758
Unalaska	173
Valdez	554
Wasilla district	585
Whittier	629
Wrangell	1, 263
Yakutat	298

## DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

The 1950 census and recent estimates show a marked increase in populations of interior Alaskan cities, particularly Anchorage and Fairbanks. Most southeastern

Alaska communities, with the notable exception of Ketchikan, have generally remained stable or have decreased in population.

## LIVING CONDITIONS

Living conditions and local customs among the white people of Alaska are not unlike those in comparable parts of the United States. Many frontier conditions and customs are, of course, still in evidence. Yet in the cities and outlying communities there are modern conveniences and facilities which are usually found only in much larger communities in the United States. The Territorial school system has the customary grade and high schools and compares favorably with that of the States. The University of Alaska is located near Fairbanks. Churches of many denominations are scattered throughout the Territory. Many communities, including Juneau, Fairbanks, Anchorage and Nome, and the Matanuska Colony at Palmer, have hospitals.

## COSTS OF LIVING

The cost of living in Alaska is higher than in the States for two major reasons: dependence upon imports of food and manufactured goods, and high cost of transportation. Naturally the farther away a person settles from the shipping centers, the more costly the commodities.

## CLOTHING

Visitors or settlers to Alaska sometimes make the mistake of dress-



ing for the Arctic. They are surprised to discover that in Southeast Alaska people wear the same type of clothing as they do in New York or Seattle, placing emphasis on rainwear. In the interior, they usually have less need for rain clothes, but, strange as it may seem, they find they need light clothes for warm summers. Of course, very warm clothes are needed for cold winters of the interior. In the towns, people dress just as they do in the towns in the Northern States.

### **ALASKA SCHOOLS**

Brief mention has been made of the Alaska school system. Perhaps a word or two more may help give a better understanding of the educational facilities. There are twenty incorporated city school systems in the Territory: Anchorage, Cordova, Craig, Douglas, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Nenana, Nome, Palmer, Petersburg, Port Alexander, Seldovia, Seward, Sitka, Skagway, Valdez, and Wrangell.

Teachers are employed by local school boards and, just as in the States, inquiries about positions should be sent to the superintendent of schools or the clerk of the school board of any particular city system.

For information on Indian schools which are under the direction of the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, an interested person should write to the Area Director, Alaska Native Service, Juneau, Alaska.

The University of Alaska is a territorial, as well as a land grant, institution located at College near Fairbanks. The university in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, operates experiment stations at Fairbanks, Matanuska, and Petersburg. Tuition, for residents of Alaska, is free. Students from the States are entitled to admission to the university, but are required to pay a reasonable tuition. The educational provisions of the GI bill of rights apply equally to the University of Alaska as they do to other institutions of higher learning in the States.

Information regarding the university may be obtained by writing to the University of Alaska, College, Alaska.

Newly constructed is another institute of higher learning in Alaska. This is the Methodist College located near Anchorage. Classes were scheduled to start in 1958.

### **MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**

The Territorial Department of Health is financed largely by funds provided by the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor. There is a Territorial Commissioner of Health, who is a full-time official. The functions of the Department include communicable disease control, maternal and child health services, crippled children's services, public health engineering, and public health laboratories. Eight relief stations are maintained

in Alaska by the United States Public Health Service. There are general hospitals in all of the larger towns in Alaska, most of them under the supervision of religious organizations. Hospital services are available to the general public, and to physicians, dentists, and nurses in private practice, but there is need for additional trained medical and nursing personnel in the Territory. (For information regarding the private practice of medicine or dentistry, write to the Territorial Department of Health, Juneau, Alaska.

The Office of Indian Affairs maintains hospitals in various parts of the Territory for the benefit of Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts, and also employs Public Health nurses who travel from one native village to another teaching sanitation, first aid, maternal and infant care, and arranging for the hospitalization of sick and injured natives. (For information regarding the Indian Services, write to the Area Director, Alaska Native Service, Juneau, Alaska.)

## **WAYS OF GAINING A LIVELIHOOD**

Alaskans now gain their living largely from employment in various Federal agencies, from fishing and fish canning, mining, transportation, trades, service industries, pulp and timber industries and general farming.

At the present time the Federal Government is the largest contributor to the Territory's economy, many private contractors being engaged in construction work for nec-

essary defense operations in the Territory.

The fishing industry in 1950 furnished employment to about 27,544 persons. Roughly 2,262 of the working population were engaged in the mining industry. These figures are contrasted with the 12,000 to 15,000 employed in 1950 in construction activities. On the whole, wages for construction work are higher in Alaska than in the United States but living costs are also higher.

## **Fishing**

Historically, Alaska's greatest industry from a wealth-producing and employment-offering standpoint has been commercial fishing and the processing of fish and sea food products. The recent serious depletion of the salmon fishing has retarded the industry to a degree, but it remains a highly important factor in the Alaskan economy.

More than half the workers in the fishing industry have their homes in the United States and go to Alaska only for the fishing season. Especially with a widened scope of both fishing and processing, employment in the industry would appear to offer reasonable opportunity for supplementing the income to many permanent residents.

More detailed information concerning the fisheries industry in Alaska is obtainable from the Administrator, Alaska Commercial Fisheries, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Juneau, Alaska, or the Director, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, U. S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, Department of the Interior,  
Washington 25, D. C.

### **Mining**

Gold mining has accounted for most of Alaska's mineral production, but due to increased costs of production, it has steadily decreased as an industry during the last few years. Highly important mercury mines are located at DeCourcy Mountain and Sleetmute. Extensive exploration for petroleum is under way and it is likely that the future will see the development of producing wells. Other metallic and nonmetallic minerals are believed to have possibilities. Alaska is known to have deposits of gold, coal, tin, chromium, copper, zinc, platinum, tungsten, gypsum, marble, and antimony. Petroleum offers one of the brightest prospects for future Alaskan Mineral development. General regions including the Yakataga-Katalla area, Wide Bay, the Kenai Peninsula, the Nelchina area near Eureka, the Susitna Valley, and the Kateel River areas are being investigated. As the development of the Territory's mineral resources advances, increased numbers of workers will be required.

Further information with respect to mineral resources or conditions in the mining industry may be obtained upon request from the Territorial Department of Mines at Juneau, or from the Director, Geological Survey, or the Director, Bureau of Mines, United States Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

### **Tourists**

Improved means of transportation and the national increase in vacation travel have resulted in a great expansion of the tourist industry in Alaska. It now ranks high in dollar income and number of Alaskans employed. Mountains and glaciers, fiords and bays, the midnight sun and northern lights and the native culture and quaint craft of Eskimos and Indians, and wildlife are all major attractions. Many vacationers are also attracted by some of the finest hunting and fishing to be had anywhere. Salmon, rainbow trout, grayling, bear, moose, caribou, and many other types of fish and game are found in relatively large numbers in areas accessible by car, boat and airplane. The quest for the world-famed Kodiak bear alone brings many thousands of dollars of tourist income to the Territory every year. Since tourist and vacationists need personal services and supplies, the tourist trade ranks high among ways of gaining a livelihood.

### **Farming and farm lands**

Except in favorable locations, agriculture, as the sole means of livelihood, is likely to attract only relatively few settlers. Although agriculture is physically possible on tillable lands in all parts of Alaska, except in the extreme north and northwest, all major developments will undoubtedly be located in a few favorably situated localities where better than average Alaskan conditions prevail with respect to



one or more of the following: Accessibility to adequate markets and availability of schools, churches, recreational facilities, medical services, and utilities; topography, elevation, and exposure of the lands and character and depth of soil; summer temperatures and precipitation and length of growing season.

Most of the hardy vegetables can be grown in gardens on favorable locations anywhere south of the Arctic Circle. However, the widespread distribution of gardens throughout the Territory is far from indisputable proof that commercial agriculture can be as universally practiced with equal success.

Of the potential farm acreage in Alaska, approximately 6,450 acres were harvested in 1950 by about 510 people gainfully employed on the farms. The products of Alaskan agriculture are insufficient to meet local demands and, as a consequence, much farm produce is shipped into the Territory. It is believed that 50 percent of Alaska's food requirements could be produced in the Territory.

Agricultural experience in Alaska has demonstrated that farming practices of the United States cannot be applied in Alaska without modification. Conditions peculiar to Alaska will be encountered, such as early and late frosts and permanently frozen ground in many northern localities.

Agriculture can be economically expanded at least to provide the Alaska market with a greater proportion of those agricultural prod-

ucts which can be produced there. However, southeast Alaska will probably continue to be more easily provisioned from the United States than from producing areas in the Territory.

## **SETTLEMENT AREAS**

Before starting for Alaska, it would be well for the prospective settler to be informed, in advance, of the several regions and the prospect which each region offers for settlement. Certain areas in the southeastern, south central, and interior parts of Alaska are thought to offer the greatest advantages for settlement at the present time. Brief discussions of these areas are given, in the following pages.

### **Southeastern Alaska**

Southeastern Alaska comprises the narrow strip of mainland lying between Canada and the sea, and the group of large and small islands called the Alexander Archipelago. This region lies nearest to the United States and supports about one-fifth of the population. For the most part it is extremely mountainous and the rugged coastline is indented with fiord-like waterways.

With the exception of limited areas surrounding the cities, virtually all of Southeast Alaska is included in the Tongass National Forest. Fine stands of Sitka spruce and western hemlock exist in this area. Inquiries concerning National forest lands should be directed to the Regional Forester, Forest Service, Juneau, Alaska.

Besides the capital city of Juneau, the cities of Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, and Skagway, are located in this southeastern area. Nearly all of these cities have most of the modern services and facilities such as schools, churches, hospitals, water systems, electricity, newspapers, and theaters.

The local economy is based on fish, minerals, timber, recreation and various minor resources. The salmon and halibut fishing industry is highly developed with Ketchikan serving as center of the largest fisheries operations. Hard rock or lode mining, principally for gold is second in economical importance. Juneau, seat of the Territory government is a distribution point for an important commercial fishing district. The office of the Area Administrator of the Bureau of Land Management and a District Office are located there.

Nearly all of the public lands in southeastern Alaska are embraced in the national forest containing great stands of commercial timber.

The climate of southeastern Alaska is equable, with mild winters, cool summers, and a heavy precipitation. In some sections, the average annual rainfall is over 150 inches; at Juneau, it is about 82 inches. The length of the growing season is about 160 days.

Southeastern Alaska, while poorly adapted to diversified agriculture, has a few small areas of farmable land suitable for dairying and for the growing of many of the more hardy vegetables and small fruits. Because of the dense cover and rugged topography, costs of

clearing and preparing land are very high. General agricultural enterprises suffer from the heavy precipitation.

Forest products industries are of increasing importance to the economy of Southeast Alaska. A large pulp mill is now in operation at Ketchikan, and sites near other cities are also being considered as possible pulp plant locations. Juneau also has a small plywood plant. These industries utilize timber from Tongass National Forest.

Southeastern Alaska can be reached by freight steamship from Seattle and by air. Steamship passenger service is available from Vancouver, British Columbia. The northern section of this area is connected with the Teritorial road system by the Haines cutoff. There are short stretches of roads leading from some of the cities. Inquiries concerning the lands adjacent to cities and towns in Southeast Alaska should be directed to the District Office, Bureau of Land Management, Juneau, Alaska or to the Anchorage Land Office.

### **South-central Alaska**

The south-central region includes the Prince William Sound and the Cook Inlet sections of the southern coast, and it extends north to the Alaska Range. There is regular freight steamship service from Seattle to Valdez, the southern terminus of the Richardson Highway, and to Seward, the southern terminus of the Alaska Railroad. There is no passenger steamship service.

Along the coast of Prince William Sound, the topography, climate, and vegetation somewhat resembles southeastern Alaska. The winters are relatively mild, summers are cool, and precipitation is generally heavy. On the inner coastal lowlands of Cook Inlet, the topography is more uniform. The climate is a favorable combination of the temperate coastal climate of southern Alaska and the extreme continental climate of the interior. The vegetation is generally a mixed forest of spruce, birch, and aspen. To the north, the moderating influence of the ocean has less effect on the climate, with the result that there is greater variation between summer and winter temperatures, the winters being colder and the summers warmer.

Within south-central Alaska, conditions affecting settlement vary from area to area to such an extent that generalizations are of little aid to the prospective settler. Certain localities offer, at this time, much better settlement opportunities than do others. Among the more favored areas are parts of the Kenai Peninsula, the area around Anchorage, and the Matanuska Valley.

South-central Alaska has a diversified economy. Through the ports of Valdez and Seward pass much of the merchandise destined for the interior, over the Alaska Railroad and the Richardson Highway. Transportation and merchandising are, therefore, important industries. Mineral production also is significant. South-central Alaska produces gold, chromium, and coal. Gold production comes largely from

the Willow Creek district, coal from Eska-Moose Creek district of the Matanuska field, on the Alaska Railroad, and chromite from the Seldovia district. Fish canneries are located on many of the coves and inlets of the region. Agriculture is practiced in several very favorable localities on the Kenai Peninsula, around Anchorage, and in the Matanuska Valley. Lumbering for local use has been carried on.

### The Kenai Peninsula

Extensive areas of fair to good farm land are located in the western lowlands of the Kenai Peninsula. Most of the better agricultural lands south of the Kasilof River that are unappropriated remain open to settlement. North of Kasilof, however, except for a 6-mile wide coastal strip and the lands along the Kenai River in Township 5 North, Ranges 8, 9, and 10 West, Seward Meridian, in which there is a relatively high proportion of agricultural land, the area has been permanently closed to entry through incorporation in the Kenai Moose Reserve in 1941. This reserve includes both Tustumena and Skilak Lakes.

Of the 338,880 acres classified in the southern and western parts of the Kenai Peninsula, 55% is typed as suitable for various agricultural uses and 45% is not considered usable. The lands classified as agricultural in character, lie mainly north and northeast of Homer, north and south of Ninilchik, south and southwest of Kasilof and south and southeast of Kenai Village.



Areas suitable for forage crop production and grazing, which comprise mainly rangelands in the Caribou Hills in the south central portion total about 32,000 acres.

*Climate.*—Short climatic records indicate that the average annual precipitation is 24.38 inches at Homer, 17.85 inches at Kasilof, and 18.79 inches at Kenai. Total rainfall during the growing season averages about 10 inches throughout the region. The growing season rainfall, however, differs greatly from year to year at each station. Usually the rainfall during the growing season is poorly distributed for agriculture, the early summer being dry and the late summer wet. Maximum temperatures in summer range between 55° and 65°. Winter day temperatures usually range between 5° to 20° above zero. The period between the last freezing temperature in spring and the first freezing temperature in the fall averages 104 days a year at Homer, 92 days at Kasilof, and about 71 days at Kenai. The grazing season of 7 to 8 months is longer than that of most of the rest of mainland Alaska. Daylight reaches a maximum of about 19 hours in midsummer.

*Soil.*—Most of the better drained land is considered fair to good farm land. The prevailing silt and fine sandy loams are usually worked and responsive, and under good farming practices, including the methodical return of manure residues and regular use of fertilizer, produce good crops of potatoes, hardy vegetables and hay. The muskeg bogs have little or no present value for agricultural use and tend to hinder the

development of the country, as they impede road construction and make good lands inaccessible.

*Vegetation.*—Forests composed predominantly of spruce, birch and aspen occur on the well-drained ridges and bench lands; muskeg swamps prevail on the interspersed flat and poorly drained areas. Little of the timber is of commercial size, but there is opportunity in more mature stands for selective cutting and sawing by portable-sawmill operators to supply local building material.

The as yet unused white birch stands offer a potential industry. The largest stands of birch west of the Mississippi River are found in the Susitna-Cook inlet region of south central Alaska. Having high value for furniture stock, interior trim, flooring and veneer, it is believed that the birch stands, and associated cottonwood offer one of the most promising future industries of the south-central region.

*Transportation.*—A highway opened in 1951 connects the various Cook Inlet communities of the Kenai Peninsula with Anchorage and the highway system of Alaska. Air transportation is available from each of the larger communities. A large new dock has been built on Homer Spit and small boat harbor improvements are projected at Ninilchik, Kasilof, and Kenai.

*Types of Farming.*—Until recently agriculture has been of a northern frontier type. Potatoes have been the main cash crop. Practically all the hardy vegetables raised in the northern States grow successfully here. Oats (for hay)

and oats and peas (for ensilage) have been the main feed crops. Dairying and other livestock enterprises are believed to be the most promising type of farming for the area. As the road to Anchorage is now completed, the area should have an expanded outlet for farm products, although marketing is now and may remain for a while one of the major problems confronting the homesteader.

In 1955 approximately 1,429 acres were under cultivation with about 38 families getting the major portion of their income from farming. It is significant that in the same year over half of the patented or entered homestead lands was completely abandoned.

Information regarding the types of soils, land capability, markets, etc. can be obtained from the Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station, Alaska, the Agricultural Extension Service, Anchorage, Alaska and the Soil Conservation Service, Palmer, Alaska.

*Availability of Land.*—There is a considerable acreage of land available on the Kenai Peninsula which is suitable for agricultural use. Accessibility is a limiting factor to much of these lands, but new construction is slowly making more lands available. For the present, there is more land available than can be economically utilized due to market, transportation and other limiting factors. Information as to the ownership status of specific tracts of land may be obtained from the Land Office at Anchorage. No lists of available lands are main-

tained as the ownership status is constantly changing.

*Employment.*—As the villages on the Kenai Peninsula are small, the opportunities for employment are limited. Fish canneries at Homer, Kenai, and Ninilchik and commercial fishing in Cook Inlet afford some employment but this occurs during the farming season. The Alaska Road Commission and other Federal agencies also employ men during the summer season, as does a military installation proximate to the town of Kenai.

At the southwestern tip of the Kenai Peninsula on Kachemak Bay near the settlement of Homer (1950 population, 307) there is a considerable area of agricultural and grazing lands. Most of the cultivable land here is in private ownership. The climate is equable and in spite of the cool and rather short summers, hardy crops do well, although some of the grain crops do not always mature.

There are other areas of reasonably level land lying on the west coast of the Peninsula along Cook Inlet. However, the problems of agriculture on the western Kenai lowlands are not primarily those of production but rather of marketing the produce at a price which can compete with shipments from the States. The high cost of labor and the requirement of considerable amounts of expensive fertilizer puts the Kenai farmers at a disadvantage. Cooperative storage, processing, and marketing facilities may be the answer to this problem.

Meantime, commercial fishing in

the adjacent waters, seasonal employment in the canneries, government employment and some mining are the sources of income. A considerable portion of the Kenai Peninsula is considered as prospective petroleum-producing land and virtually all of the promising land which is open to leasing is now under lease. In the future this may provide a new source of employment for residents of the Kenai Peninsula.

### **Anchorage**

The Anchorage area has experienced a remarkable wartime growth in the past few years. The city of Anchorage had a population of about 3,500 in 1939, and 11,254 in 1950. Anchorage District had 32,060 in 1950. 1955 estimates indicate that the populations of both the city and the district are almost double the 1950 figure.

Possessing most of the modern facilities and utilities usually found in cities of comparable size, and some found only in much larger cities in the United States, the metropolis of this general area, lies at the head of Cook Inlet, on the Alaska Railroad.

The Bureau of Land Management Operations Office, A Land Office, and a District Forester's office, are located in this city to provide service on public land matters.

Two large military facilities, Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson, are located adjacent to the Anchorage city limits. These bases employ thousands of civilian workers and are the main

source of income for residents of Anchorage, either directly or indirectly.

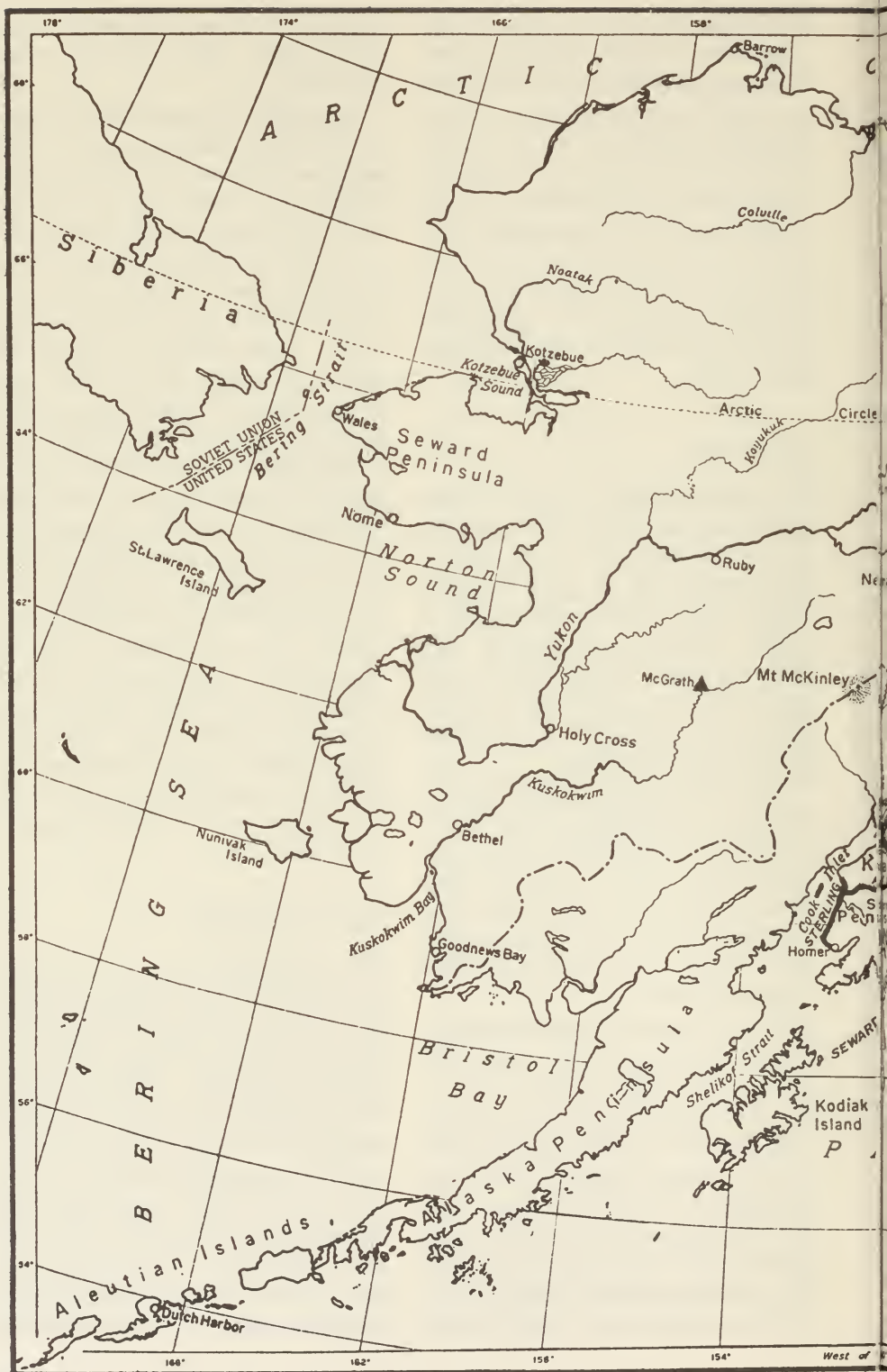
A number of commercial airlines radiate from Anchorage. Anchorage is also connected with the main highway network of the Territory and the Continental United States.

In the immediate vicinity of Anchorage, most of the land not in reservations is in private ownership. Agriculture is not extensive, there are only about 625 acres cropped or 5 full-time farms and 25 part-time farms. The market for agricultural products would appear to warrant more intense use of the land best suited for crop production, however, most of the suitable land adjacent to Anchorage has been subdivided for suburban residential use. A Bureau of Land Management classification survey, conducted in 1946, revealed there were about 16,300 acres of cultivable land in the area. A more recent SCS land capability survey indicates there are about 17,700 acres of farm land.

### **Matanuska Valley**

The Matanuska Valley, and more especially the Government colony, have demonstrated that farming in Alaska on a commercial scale is entirely practicable. Those members of the Colony who had a farming background and who have proceeded energetically with the development of their farms have met with gratifying success. The list of the domestic food and feed crops that are being successfully grown includes many of the commoner





- showing -

- Scale in Miles



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
- 1957 -

field crops grown in the northern United States, except corn and alfalfa, and all of the common vegetables except those intolerant of cold. Dairying has gained in importance. The present major outlook lies in the production of dairy products, poultry products, potatoes, vegetables, and hardy grains. There are about 9,000 acres of cleared land in the Matanuska Valley—about three-fourths of the cropland in Alaska. Approximately 100 full-time farmers and over 200 part-time farmers sell over one and a half million dollars worth of farm products annually.

Palmer, the center of community life for the Matanuska Valley, has all the essentials of a small modern town. A branch line of the Alaska Railroad goes through Palmer. A highway links it with Anchorage, 40 miles to the south, and the Alaska Highway to the northeast.

This region offers several advantages to the prospective settler. At present, agriculture is more extensive and the opportunities for varied kinds of agriculture are perhaps greater than elsewhere in Alaska. A land capability survey in the Matanuska Valley by the Soil Conservation Service has revealed that 59,435 acres are cultivable. The climate is not extreme. It is accessible to one of the largest market areas in the Territory. It is close to the Willow Creek mining area and the Matanuska coal fields.

Land in the Government colony in the Matanuska Valley can be acquired only by purchase, and inquiry concerning such land should be made of the General Manager,

Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Palmer, Alaska.

Additional information concerning the Matanuska Colony may be secured from the booklet, "Agriculture in the Matanuska Valley Alaska," obtainable free of charge from the General Manager at Palmer, or from the Director, Office of Territories and Island Possessions, United States Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C. A publication entitled "The Matanuska Valley Colony" by Dr. Kirk H. Stone, gives further information on this subject. Two other good source books are: "Some Economic Aspects of Farming in Alaska (with chief attention to the Matanuska Valley)" Progress Report, Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station, Washington, D. C., January, 1950, and, by the same authors—"Markets for the Products of Cropland in Alaska," July 1950.

Recently the adjacent Susitna Valley region has been the scene of considerable oil exploration, and it is possible that the economy of the area could be stimulated considerably if these efforts prove successful.

Outside the colony boundaries are portions of the public domain in the Matanuska Valley which, if vacant and unreserved, are available for disposal under applicable public land laws. To the west where the valley opens into the Susitna Valley lowlands, an SCS land capability survey revealed there are 61,251 acres of cultivable land interspersed with about an equal amount of uncultivable lands. The



manager of the land office at Anchorage can furnish detailed information concerning these public lands.

### **Interior Alaska**

Interior Alaska largely comprises the drainage basins of the Yukon, the Tanana, the Copper, and Kuskokwim Rivers. While in places it is mountainous, the area is not characterized generally by especially rough terrain. The climate in the interior is more severe than on the coast, being marked by very cold winters and short, warm summers.

Mining has been one of the principal industries of this region. For the most part, this is placer mining—much of the gold being recovered through large scale dredging operations. Gold is produced in many parts of the region including the Fairbanks district, the Eagle and Fortymile districts on the Yukon River, and in the Kuskokwim Valley. Coal is mined at Healy on the Alaska Railroad and at other accessible points for heating use, for the railroad, for power production and for mining. Other minerals are known to occur, but in general the area has not as yet been adequately prospected. Important potential mining fields embrace gold, copper, antimony, tungsten, and mercury, as well as large quantities of the nonmetallic minerals. Recently there has been increased interest in oil exploration in several interior districts.

The Tanana Valley in the vicinity of Fairbanks has a large acreage of potential farm land including valley bottom and bench land. By Alaskan standards, the soils here are considered to be good. Soil Conservation Service and Bureau of Land Management land classification surveys have mapped a total of 331,894 acres of cultivable lands. These classifications of land, however, do not take account of sporadic differential settlement of the land which may occur due to changes in permafrost conditions.

Immediately adjacent to Fairbanks, most of this land has been entered upon or has already been patented. There about 12 full-time farms and about 63 part-time farms which produce hardy vegetables, root crops, and grains valued at nearly a half million dollars. Successful dairying is carried on. Dairy products are especially in demand and a good market exists at Fairbanks. Potatoes also are an important market crop. In all, about 2,260 acres are being farmed in the Fairbanks area.

The frost-free season extends from about May 20 to about September 5, on an average. During this growing season the days are long and the additional hours of sunlight result in accelerated crop growth. On July 1 the sun rises at 1:30 a. m., and sets at 10:30 p. m. Total precipitation ranges from 8.5 to 16 inches, with approximately one-half falling during the growing season. Under the prevailing conditions this amount of rainfall is

ordinarily sufficient to produce crops. Dry weather in late spring and early summer and drizzling rains in late summer sometimes may adversely affect certain crops.

Considerable potential agricultural lands occur elsewhere in interior Alaska, particularly in the valleys of the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Copper Rivers. Climate and soils are believed to be suitable for the production of crops. However, at the present time these areas are isolated from markets and the local demand for agricultural products is insufficient to sustain any sizable farm development.

Furs are not considered important in the local economy. In interior Alaska, some fur trapping still continues, but is no longer rated an important source of revenue. Fur farming also is carried on to some extent.

Interior Alaska forests contain white and black spruce, white birch, and cottonwood. While these species are generally small in size, they have high local value because they are found throughout the Territory, south of the Brooks and Endicott Ranges. White spruce is today the predominant commercial species. Numerous small sawmills are located around population centers and in many areas supply the total forest product demand. The interior forests are largely found in belts along the stream courses and in the low-lying bench lands. White spruce will continue to be the primary species cut for local consumption as fuelwood, mine timbers, lumber, poles, etc.

## **Fairbanks**

Fairbanks, a busy town with modern economic and cultural facilities, is the center of activity for interior Alaska. In 1940, Fairbanks had a population of about 3,500, Fairbanks City, 5,771 in 1950; Fairbanks District, 19,409 in 1950. Since then, defense developments have increased the population and altered the city's economic characteristics. By 1955 it was estimated that the city population is well over 10,000 and that there are approximately 30,000 people in the Fairbanks district.

A Land Office and District Forester's office are located in Fairbanks.

Fairbanks is the northern terminus for the Alaska Railroad, and the Richardson Highway and the Alaska Highway, while from the city the Steese Highway runs northeast to Circle on the Yukon River, and another road—the Elliot Highway—runs northwest to Livengood. Airlines radiate from Fairbanks, and it is expected to be the hub of a greatly expanded air network. Two large air bases, Ladd Field and Eilson Air Force Base, are located in the Fairbanks vicinity, and these facilities add greatly to the local economy.

## **Other settlement areas**

Scattered throughout Alaska are other potential settlement areas which may at some future date offer many opportunities. While by reason of climate, isolation, and

other factors, these regions may not be so desirable at this time as are the regions just discussed, they may offer advantages to those with special skills or interests.

### **Southwestern Alaska—Bristol Bay**

This region covers the Bristol Bay area, the lower Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers, the Alaska Peninsula, and the Aleutian Islands. Much of it has rugged topography, and it generally has wet, foggy summers, and cold, moist winters. The vegetation commonly consists of grasses and brush. There are no large commercial timber supplies. The fisheries of the Bristol Bay area contribute a large portion of the Alaska salmon pack. Platinum is recovered from gravels in the Goodnews Bay district. Many of the Aleutian Islands are considered suitable for stock raising and some have been stocked with cattle and sheep on an experimental basis. Some fur farming also is carried on in the islands. Commercial transportation, except by air, over large portions of this region either does not exist or is infrequent and available only at certain seasons. Community facilities are meager.

### **Seward Peninsula**

The Seward Peninsula is one of the most northerly areas of Alaska and has a climate characterized by short summers and long, cold winters. Nome, with a population of about 1,876 in 1950 is the largest town. The population of the Cape Nome District in 1950 was 5,592. Nome is

connected with Fairbanks and Anchorage by regular daily air service. Otherwise, it is isolated in winter. Steamer service reaches this area in the summer. In Nome, there are churches, a grade public school and high school, hospitals, and many municipal facilities and conveniences.

Placer gold mining is the principal occupation. In the mining districts of the Seward Peninsula there are known to be antimony, tin, coal, and lesser amounts of other valuable minerals besides gold. Tin deposits in the York district at the extreme western tip of the Peninsula are the basis for one of the few tin mines on the North American Continent.

Fur trapping occupies a high place in the economy of the area and to a limited extent there is fur farming.

There is virtually no possibility for agriculture as we know it now.

### **Arctic Slope**

This part of Alaska extending north from the Brooks Range to the Arctic Ocean appears to offer very little to attract additional settlement at the present time. It is a generally flat and treeless area of frozen tundra subject to fog and frequent storms. It has a typically Arctic climate, long, cold winters and short, cool summers. The small population is mostly native. Much of the area is included in a petroleum reserve. The town of Barrow is located about 10 miles south of Point Barrow, the northernmost tip of Alaska.



## PUBLIC LAND

## AND

## RESOURCES

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### AREAS

In terms of public land surveys, Alaska is still comparatively unsurveyed. The total area of the Territory is about 365,481,600 acres, exclusive of inland waters, of which about 95,000,000 acres are embraced in reservations, including those made for national defense purposes, national parks, national forests, et cetera. Approximately 2,629,086 acres, about 1 percent, have been surveyed under the Federal rectangular system of surveys and as special surveys by metes and bounds.

### RECORD STATUS OF LAND

Information as to the record status of any particular tract of public land may be obtained from the land office for the district in which the land is situated. The land offices in Alaska are located in Anchorage and Fairbanks. The Anchorage Land District comprises roughly the First and Third Judicial Divi-

sions, while the Fairbanks District approximates the Second and Fourth Divisions. Records of unpatented mining locations, however, are not available in BLM offices. These are recorded in the offices of the United States Commissioners. The records of Commissioner's offices, when not needed for official purposes, are open to public inspection. The Territorial Commissioner of Mines at Juneau also maintains a comprehensive record of both patented and unpatented claims.

No land lists are maintained and prospective settlers must check with the land offices to determine what lands are available. Quite current land status surveys have been compiled for various areas in Alaska, however, for reviewing or purchase at the Land Offices.

### SOME EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS

The following information is intended to familiarize people who are new to the Territory and to the

Bureau of Land Management with some of the phraseology and conditions which confront a prospective user of public domain.

First, it is important to keep in mind that almost all applications for use or disposal of unappropriated public domain lands and resources are filed in the land offices. Unless otherwise specified, applications under all of the laws described in the remainder of this publication are filed in either the Anchorage Land Office or the Fairbanks Land Office. The address of the Anchorage Land Office is Box 1740, Anchorage, Alaska. The address of the Fairbanks Land Office is Box 110, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Most land law disposals are on a "one to a customer" basis, that is, an individual is entitled to obtain only one headquarters site, one 160 acre homestead, etc.

A "patent" corresponds to a deed and is the initial instrument of transfer of title to public lands from the United States to private ownership. Patented land, then, is land which has passed into private ownership. Unpatented land, with a few minor exceptions, is termed public domain. "Withdrawn" or "reserved" land is public domain which has been set aside for some governmental use. Vacant public domain is unreserved, unpatented and otherwise unappropriated public land.

In reading the following sections, it is necessary to understand the difference between surveyed and unsurveyed land. Most surveys in Alaska have been executed under the rectangular system of surveys

which identifies lands by township, range, section, and aliquot parts of sections. This is the same system that covers about three-fourths of the United States. Another type of surveyed land is that which is included in *special surveys*, usually in more isolated locations. A very small portion of Alaska is surveyed but the most accessible and intensively used areas have been covered.

Unsurveyed land is any land not officially surveyed by either of the above two systems of survey.

Settlement is usually accomplished by establishing a claim and filing a location notice (for unsurveyed lands) or an application to enter (for surveyed lands).

## USE OF PUBLIC DOMAIN

There are many laws which govern the use and disposal of the public lands and resources in Alaska. Virtually every conceivable use can be accommodated by one or another of them. They are too numerous and complex to be considered in great detail in publication of this type. What follows is intended to be only a review of the main features of the more important statutes. The land offices at Anchorage and Fairbanks should be contacted for more detailed and specific information.

A general grouping according to type of land use and resource would classify the laws as agricultural, residential, commercial, mineral, timber and materials, and miscellaneous. The citations listed for each type of entry refer to the governing regulations in Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations.

## **AGRICULTURAL LAND USE**

### **Homesteads (43 CFR Parts 65 and 166)**

All unappropriated and unreserved public land in Alaska which is adaptable to any agricultural use, and which contains no minerals other than coal, oil, gas, or other leasable minerals is subject to homestead settlement.

### **Suggestions for Prospective Homesteaders**

Homestead settlement involves the selection of suitable land. Since residence on the land and cultivation of a substantial part of the entry are required, the prospective settler should exercise extreme care in the selection of his land. He should select land in an area reasonably convenient to community services and facilities, including schools, churches, medical care, and stores or trading posts. His homestead should embrace cultivable land adequate in quality and size for profitable farming. And finally, he should make certain that there is a satisfactory market for his produce.

Soil surveys have been extended over about 1,500,000 acres in Alaska. These reports are generally available as a guide to the selection of land at the Soil Conservation Service, Alaska Agricultural Experiment Station, or Bureau of Land Management Offices. There is no single indicator of good land, although the presence of a heavy stand of white spruce and white birch is sometimes indicative of good agricultural soils. This cover

association is also to be found on relatively thin soils not adapted to sustained crop production, however.

A careful examination should be made of the slope and drainage of the land and of the depth and character of the soil before final selection is made.

(See tables on pp. 21, 22, and 23 of House Resolution 30, 84th Congress First Session.)

Finally, a prospective homestead settler should have financial assets sufficient to take care of living costs during the development period and to cover expenditures for clearing and preparing the land, constructing the necessary access roads and buildings, and securing essential equipment. These costs will be much higher in Alaska than elsewhere in the United States. The cost of clearing the land runs as high as \$125 an acre.

### **Qualifications for homesteading**

In order to make an original homestead settlement or entry in Alaska, the applicant must be 21 years of age (except if he is a veteran of the Korean conflict) or the head of a family. He must be a citizen of the United States or have formally declared his intentions to become a citizen, and must not own more than 160 acres of land in the United States. One who has perfected a homestead entry in Alaska for 160 acres is not qualified to make a second homestead entry in the Territory. A former homestead entry in the States is not a disqualification,



however. A married woman is not qualified to make a homestead entry if she is residing with her husband and he is the head and main support of the family.

### **How to homestead**

Homestead settlement may be made on either surveyed or unsurveyed public land. A settler on land in Alaska should mark the boundaries of his claim by permanent monuments at each corner. To secure the land against adverse claim, a settler on unsurveyed land must make substantially continuous improvement of the claim such as clearing, building a driveway, etc. He must also file a notice of his settlement on Form 4-1154 in the Land Office for the district in which the land is situated, within 90 days after initial settlement. If settlement is made on surveyed land, the homesteader should file in the land office either a homestead application or a notice on Form 4-1154 within 90 days of settlement. Forms for giving notice of settlement and for making homestead application are obtainable from the land offices.

### **Area and shape of homestead claims**

Homestead claims in Alaska are restricted to 160 acres. A settlement claim on unsurveyed land must be made in rectangular and compact form, not more than 1 mile long, with side lines running in cardinal directions (north, south, east, west). Where local or topographical conditions make cardinal boundaries impossible, other direc-

tions may be used. The four corners must be marked on the ground by monuments such as large wooden posts, iron pipes, etc.

A homestead on surveyed land may include only legal subdivisions which adjoin each other. Homestead claims or entries, except in national forests, may not extend more than 160 rods ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile) along the shore of any navigable water. A waiver of this restriction may be had upon application if conditions warrant.

### **Residence**

For settlement claims, residence must be established within 6 months after date of recordation of the location notice. In other cases, residence must be established within 6 months of the date of allowance of the homestead entry. Upon application, an extension of time may be allowed, giving the homesteader up to 1 year within which to establish residence. He may not delay establishing residence, however, beyond the end of his first year. Residence must be maintained in good faith as a home, to the exclusion of a home elsewhere, for 3 years unless the entry is commuted. (See "Commuted Proof".)

During each year beginning with the establishment of residence, a settler or entryman may absent himself from the land for not more than two periods, aggregating as much as 5 months. If the homesteader takes advantage of these permissible absences he should notify the manager of the land office of the date when he leaves the

land and the date when he returns.

In addition to the above, a settler or entryman who has established actual residence on the land may be granted a leave of absence therefrom for 1 year or less in cases where total or partial failure or destruction of crops, sickness, or other unavoidable hardship has prevented the claimant from supporting himself and those dependent on him by the cultivation of the land. Application for such leave must be made on a form which may be obtained from the manager, *and his approval is required before the period of absence may begin.*

Further relief may be available to the homesteader in localities where climatic conditions make residence on a settlement claim or entry for 7 months in each year a hardship. In these instances, the term of residence, on application by the claimant, may be reduced to 6 months in each year over a period of 4 years or to 5 months each year over a period of 5 years. Again, advance approval for such deviation from normal procedures must be obtained.

A homestead settler or entryman must have a habitable house on the land when proof is made. Proof is the filing of sworn statements showing that the claimant has complied with the law and regulations and is otherwise qualified to make application for patent.

### Cultivation

During the *second* year a homesteader is required to cultivate not less than one-sixteenth of the area

in his claim. During the *third* year he must again cultivate the one-sixteenth tilled the second year and must bring an additional one-sixteenth under cultivation. Thus the total third-year cultivation requirement is one-eighth of the area entered or claimed. If the homesteader does not submit proof in the third year, he must continue to cultivate one-eighth of the area until proof is submitted.

A reduction in the cultivation requirements may be granted on proper application if, after the initiation of an entry or claim, it is found that cultivation of the prescribed amounts is not reasonably practicable and *that the condition preventing cultivation would not have been foreseen by a person of ordinary prudence* or where the entryman meets with misfortune after establishing residence which renders him reasonably unable to cultivate the required area. No reduction will be made in the required area of cultivation on account of the expense in removing the standing timber from the land, or where at the time of the initiation of the entry or claim known conditions made it apparent that there was no market for agricultural produce.

### Survey requirements

Even if the public-land surveys have not been extended to the land included in a homestead claim, the settler, after complying with the terms of the homestead law, may submit final proof to the manager. Free surveys will then be made by the United States government.

## Final proof

Proof of entry must be made within 5 years from the date of entry or within 5 years from the date of the filing in the land office of the notice of settlement claim. In order to make acceptable 3-year proof, the claimant must show 3 years residence on the land, cultivation of one-eighth of the area embraced in the entry or claim, and that he has placed a habitable house on the land. No payment for the land is required where such proof is made except for nominal fees and commissions.

## Commuted proof

“Commutation” is a term applied to an alternative form of proof which in effect permits the homesteader to avoid the third year’s residence and cultivation by paying for the land and fulfilling 14 months residence during the first 2 years. A homestead which is not in a national forest may be commuted by showing substantially 14 months’ continuous residence, the cultivation of not less than one-sixteenth of the area (if proof is offered prior to the end of the second entry year) and that a habitable house has been placed on the land. Commutation proof can be submitted after the second entry year, but one-eighth cultivation must then be shown. Where commutation proof is submitted the claimant must make payment for the land at the rate of \$1.25 per acre in addition to the fees and commissions.

## FEES AND COMMISSIONS

A fee of \$10 must be paid for recording a notice of homestead settlement. A homesteader applying for surveyed lands must pay a fee of \$5 if the area applied for is less than 81 acres, or \$10 if 81 acres or more. Payment must be made at the time of entry. In addition, the homesteader must pay a small fee amounting to \$.0375 per acre at the time he files his application and again when he files final proof. A fee of \$5 is charged when final proof is filed. The claimant must also pay the cost of advertising his proof notice and a testimony fee of 22½ cents for each 100 words reduced to writing in the proof.

## CREDIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE

Any officer, soldier, seaman, or marine who served not less than 90 days in the Army or Navy of the United States during World War I, The Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, or the Mexican border operations, or any person who rendered 30 days or more military service in the Indian wars from January 1, 1817, to December 31, 1898, *and was honorably discharged*, is entitled to have a period equal to the term of his service in the Army or Navy, not exceeding 2 years, deducted from the 3 years’ residence and cultivation required under the homestead laws. Thus, for example, by living on the land seven months and submitting acceptable final proof within the first



year, such veterans with 19 months or more of military service may avoid cultivation altogether and would not be required to live on the land during the 2nd and 3rd years.

Veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict with at least 19 months of service can also avoid 2 years' residence but they must either cultivate one-eighth of the acreage of the entry before submitting final proof, or they may commute the entry with one-sixteenth cultivation and the payment of \$1.25 per acre as outlined under "Commuted Proof". Where lands are newly opened to entry by reason of the filing of plats of survey or restored from withdrawals and reservations, or by classification under the Small Tract Act, veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict with credit for at least 90 days' service are granted a preference right of application for a period of 90 days before the lands become subject to application by the general public. Under certain conditions, veterans' rights are transferrable to their spouses, widows, heirs, or devisees.

## **HOMESTEAD ENTRIES IN NATIONAL FORESTS**

Homestead entries may be made in national forests only after the lands desired have been listed by the Secretary of Agriculture as agricultural in character and an order has been issued by the Secretary of the Interior opening the land to settlement and entry. Information as to the boundaries of the forests and the methods of applying may be

obtained by addressing the Chief, Forest Service, Washington 25, D. C., or the Regional Forester, Juneau, Alaska. Homestead entries in national forests have essentially the same requirements as homesteads on open public domain except that such entries cannot be commuted.

### **Homestead entry on coal, oil, or gas lands (43 CFR Part 66)**

Where homestead entry is made in Alaska for land classified or known to be valuable for coal, oil, or gas, the entryman must consent to a reservation of the mineral deposits to the United States, together with the right to prospect for, mine, and remove the same. If the entry is made in an area which is under mineral lease the homestead will be subject to the lease.

### **Grazing leases and permits (43 CFR Part 63)**

Leases and permits for grazing animals other than reindeer may be issued for such areas of public domain lands as may be authorized by the Secretary of the Interior. Leases are issued to qualified livestock operators in accordance with proposed plans of development for terms not exceeding 20 years at annual grazing fees fixed with due regard to the economic value of the grazing privileges contained within the leased area. A grazing lease does not exclude settlement or entry of the leased area by persons utilizing any of several public land laws, however, and the portion of the



leased area so entered or settled must be canceled from the lease. Free permits are issued for grazing when small numbers of livestock are kept for domestic purposes only.

## **RESIDENTIAL LAND USES**

### **Homesites (43 CFR Part 64)**

Persons who desire a tract of land for rural residential use often find that the Homesite Act of 1934 is well suited to their needs. Essentially, this is a homestead limited to 5 acres (330' x 660') with no cultivation requirement and a reduced residence requirement.

To qualify for patent under this act, a person must first file a notice of location in the appropriate land office. Then, within the following five years, he must live on the land in a habitable house for a least 5 months during each of 3 years. After complying with these requirements, the applicant may purchase the land at a cost of \$2.50 per acre, but not less than \$10.

The Homesite settler on unsurveyed lands is not required to pay the cost of the survey which must be made before patent can be issued. Veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict are given credit for the required periods of residence of not to exceed 2 years of their military service.

### **Small tracts (43 CFR Part 257)**

Under the Act of June 1, 1938, as amended, small tracts not exceeding five acres of public land in Alaska, whether surveyed or unsurveyed,

may be leased or sold for residential, recreational, business or community purposes.

Any citizen of the United States as well as partnerships, associations, corporations, or governmental subdivisions are eligible to apply for small tracts.

Lands are generally disposed of on a lease-with-option-to-purchase basis. Leases normally run for a 2-year period, during which improvements specified by the Bureau of Land Management must be constructed. Any time after acceptable improvements have been placed on the land and before termination of the lessees' application to purchase at the appraised value stated in the lease form may be filed. Ordinarily, leases will not be renewed. Renewals are possible in unusual cases where extreme hardship would result if the lease were not renewed and where lessees demonstrate that their failure to place suitable improvements on the land was due to unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances.

Land classified for "lease only" may be leased for periods up to 20 years. Improvements suitable for the contemplated use and acceptable to the Bureau of Land Management must be constructed by the lessee.

A filing fee of \$10 is required for each application together with such advance rental as is provided in the classification order or the regulations. Filing fees are generally not refundable.

Since the situation with respect to status of lands changes almost daily, diagrams or listings of tracts open to application are not maintained

for mailing purposes. Up-to-date records are maintained in Fairbanks and Anchorage Land Offices, however, and these records are available for public inspection.

Persons interested in obtaining a small tract should call at these offices where they can obtain information as to whether or not areas in which they are interested are open for filing. After an applicant has ascertained the location of the area in which he is interested, the Land Office can then furnish the specific information desired for purposes of investigation and filing of an application.

## **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND USE**

### **Trade and manufacturing sites (43 CFR Part 81)**

The Trade and Manufacturing Site Act provides a means of obtaining title to lands for establishment of a business enterprise. An applicant should file a notice of location in the land office before he makes any substantial investment in the land. In any case, notice must be filed within 90 days after the first making occupancy. Only nonmineral lands are obtainable under this Act and the claim may not extend more than 80 rods ( $\frac{1}{4}$  mile) along the shore of any navigable water. A Trade and Manufacturing Site may embrace only as much acreage as is occupied and used by the applicant and in no case may it exceed 80 acres. A site for a *proposed* business may not be patented under this act.

Upon showing that all of the land applied for is being occupied as a site for trade, manufacturing, or other productive industry, it may be purchased at \$2.50 per acre. If the land applied for is unsurveyed, however, the applicant must also pay the cost of survey. Application must be filed within 5 years from date of initiation of the claim but to protect his claim, the applicant must make prompt and continuous occupancy of the site.

### **Headquarters site (43 CFR Part 64)**

This type of disposal is designed to provide a headquarters for fishermen, trappers, guides, and others engaged in productive industry. A maximum of 5 acres is obtainable under the Headquarters Site Act. Notice of location must be filed in the land office and application to purchase must be made within 5 years. There must be substantially continuous use of the land. The applicant must show that he or his employer is engaged in a productive industry and that he has established a headquarters in connection with that industry. The land is purchasable for \$2.50 per acre and if the land is unsurveyed, the applicant must pay the cost of survey.

### **Alaska public sale (43 CFR Part 75)**

Tracts not exceeding 160 acres in the aggregate, which have been classified as suitable for industrial or commercial purposes, including construction of multiple housing units, may be purchased at public auction. Classification means that

a determination is made by the Bureau of Land Management that the lands are suitable for industrial, commercial, or multiple housing purposes. The lands are sold at public auction for not less than their appraised value. Individuals, partnerships, or corporations, including municipal corporations, are eligible to purchase industrial or commercial sites at auction provided the lands are put to some definite industrial or commercial use within a reasonable time after purchase and provided they have the financial means to develop the lands in accordance with a proposed utilization program. They must obtain approval of a utilization plan. After approval of the plan and payment of the purchase price, a certificate of sale is issued to the successful bidder. This certificate of sale is assignable if the assignee is qualified under the Act and also obtains approval of a utilization plan. Certificate holders who have fully complied with the approved utilization plan must apply for patent of the lands within 3 years of the purchase date.

#### **Small tracts (business site) (43 CFR Part 257)**

A commercial or business site may also be obtained under the Small Tract Act previously discussed. The requirements are similar to those for other small tract uses except that rental is based upon a percentage of gross income. The improvements must be appropriate for the business enterprise.

## **MINERAL LAND USES**

### **Mining claim locations and patents (43 CFR Parts 69, 75.35 and 185)**

Deposits of minerals, other than coal, phosphate, oil, oil shale, gas, sodium, and potash, in the public lands and national forests of Alaska are subject to location and may be patented under the general mining laws of the United States. The purchase price is \$2.50 per acre for placer claims and \$5 per acre for lode claims. A valid discovery must be shown on each location. A mining claim is recorded only with the local U. S. Commissioner. No recording is made with the Land Office until and unless the claimant wishes to apply for patent. Minerals such as common varieties of stone, gravel, sand, pumice, pumice, cinders, and clay are not locatable under the mining laws. They may be purchased under the Materials Act, however.

A lode claim is limited in area to a tract not exceeding 1,500 feet in length by 600 feet in width. The law imposes no limit as to the number of lode locations which may be made by a single individual, association or corporation.

A placer location for gold, silver, or other precious metals or minerals, may not exceed 20 acres in area for an individual location or have greater length than 1,320 feet, provided, that where a parcel of placer ground lies between and adjoins two or more validly located claims, this restriction as to length shall not apply. No person shall locate, or cause to be located for himself more than two such placer



claims, and no association of persons shall locate, or cause to be located for themselves more than two such association placer claims in the same Recording District, in any calendar month, and no individual shall be included in more than two such locations in any calendar month. No person may exercise powers of attorney so as to locate more than two such placer claims under all such powers in the same Recording District in any calendar month. No such association placer claim shall be located in excess of 40 acres and have a greater length than 2,640 feet. Mining for gold and other precious metals is authorized under certain conditions in land below the line of ordinary high tide on tidal waters and below the line of ordinary high water mark on nontidal waters navigable in fact.

Mining of mineral deposits on lands in the Mount McKinley National Park and in the Glacier Bay National Monument is also permissible as is mining on public lands withdrawn or reserved for power development, and on lands segregated for classification or sold under the Alaska Public Sale Act.

Except in the case of a placer location for gold, silver, or other precious metals or minerals, a placer location may embrace not exceeding 20 acres in area for an individual location, 40 acres for an association of two or more persons, 60 acres for an association of three or more and so on up to 160 acres for an association of eight or more persons. The law imposes no limit as to the number of placer locations for sub-

stances other than gold, silver, or other precious metals or minerals which may be made by a single individual, association, or corporation.

On each placer claim not less than \$100 worth of labor shall be performed or improvements made during each year for each and every 20 acres or excess fraction contained therein.

In order to patent a mining claim an individual makes application to the appropriate land office. At least \$500 worth of improvement work of a mining nature must have been performed on each claim and the applicant must have the claim surveyed at his expense, unless it is a placer claim which can be described by a legal subdivision of the public land survey.

Under Public Law 167, approved July 23, 1955, the United States may manage and dispose of the surface resources or unpatented mining claims located after July 23, 1955 and also on those claims located prior to that date where a determination has been made or a waiver filed giving the United States authority to manage and dispose of such surface resources.

### **Coal (43 CFR Part 70)**

Public lands in Alaska known to be valuable for their deposits of coal may be divided into suitable leasing blocks or tracts of 40 acres each, or multiples thereof, in such form as will permit the most economical mining of the coal therein, not exceeding 2,560 acres in any such leasing block or tract; and thereafter



such blocks or tracts may be offered for lease by competitive bidding, after publication of notice of the lease offer.

Coal prospecting permits are issued for a period of 4 years for the purpose of prospecting unclaimed and undeveloped lands in Alaska, where prospecting or exploratory work is necessary to determine the existence or workability of coal deposits and may embrace not exceeding 2,560 acres. If during the permit term, the permittee shows that the permit lands contain coal in commercial quantities, he is entitled to a preference right lease for all or part of the lands, in reasonably compact form.

All leases are issued for a period of 50 years from date thereof and are subject to renewal and readjustment of the lease terms at the end of each succeeding 50-year period during the continuance of the lease unless otherwise provided by law at the time of the expiration of any such period. In addition, the United States, at the end of each 20-year period of the lease, may readjust the royalties payable under the lease. Lessees must pay such royalties at the end of each month succeeding that of the shipment of coal from the mine on the leased lands. They must also pay rental annually, in advance, for each acre or part thereof covered by the lease, beginning with the date of the lease, at the rate of 25 cents for the first year, 50 cents for the second, third, fourth and fifth years, respectively, and \$1 for the sixth and each succeeding year during the continu-

ance of the lease, such rental for any year to be credited against the first royalties as they accrue during the lease year for which the rental was paid.

Two-year coal licenses are issued, for supplying strictly local and domestic needs for fuel, without the payment of royalty for the coal mined. In addition to the time limit, such a license is limited to specified tracts not to exceed 10 acres in any one coal field. While the Act of October 20, 1914 (38 Stat. 741, et. seq.) limits a license period to 10 years, a license will expire by limitation at the end of two years from date of issuance, unless timely renewed on application filed prior to expiration of the two-year period, subject to such conditions necessary for the protection of the public interest as may be imposed prior to or at the time of the renewal.

Leases, prospecting permits and licenses may be issued to citizens of the United States over the age of 21 years, associations of such citizens, corporations organized under the laws of the United States or any State or Territory thereof, including a company or corporation operating a railroad or common carrier, and municipalities.

Where an applicant for a lease or permit operates a railroad or common carrier, it must make a statement that it operates main or branch lines in the Territory of Alaska, and that the coal or coal lands applied for through leases, applications thereof, and permits, do not exceed such area or quantity

as may be required and used solely for its own use.

Every applicant for lease or permit must show that there is a need for additional coal production which cannot otherwise be reasonably met, or, if such a showing of need cannot be made, a statement of the reasons why a lease or permit is desired, and that, with the area applied for, his or its interest or interests in coal permits, leases and applications therefor, directly or indirectly, do not exceed in the aggregate 2,560 acres.

### **Oil and gas (43 CFR Parts 71, 191, 192)**

Oil and gas leases are of two types, competitive leases which are issued for lands within a known geologic structure of a producing oil or gas field, and noncompetitive leases which are issued for lands not within such known geologic structure. Leases will be issued only to citizens of the United States, associations of such citizens, or corporations organized under the laws of the United States, any State or Territory. A minor may not obtain or hold leases except as heir or devisee of an offeror or lessee, and aliens may not acquire interests in oil and gas leases except through stockholdings in corporations if the laws of their country do not deny like privileges to American citizens. No person, association, or corporation may hold more than 100,000 acres in the Territory of Alaska under oil and gas leases, either directly or indirectly as a member of

an association or through stockholdings in a corporation.

Noncompetitive (wildcat) leases are issued to the first qualified applicant making an offer for a lease, for a period of 5 years and so long as oil or gas is produced in paying quantities. An annual rental is charged on the leased land at the rate of 25 cents per acre for the first year, no rental for the second and third lease years, and 25 cents per acre for the fourth and fifth lease years. A noncompetitive lease is subject to a single 5-year extension under certain conditions at a rental of 25 cents an acre for the sixth and each succeeding lease year. Royalty on production is payable at the rate of 5 percent for 10 years after discovery and at the rate of 12½ percent thereafter.

Competitive leases for lands within a known geologic structure are issued through competitive bidding only to the qualified bidder who submits the highest bid as a bonus for the privilege of obtaining the lease. Competitive leases are also issued for a term of 5 years and so long thereafter as production is in paying quantities. The annual rental on these leases is \$1 per acre for each lease year, with royalty on any production obtained under the lease of not less than 12½ percent.

To date virtually all of the land in Alaska is wildcat land. The procedures for obtaining leases for these lands under the Mineral Leasing Act of February 25, 1920 (41 Stat. 437), are the same as for obtaining similar leases for lands in the continental United States.

## **MINERALS AND SCHOOL SECTIONS**

Under a law enacted by Congress in 1952, the public lands reserved to the Territory of Alaska for educational purposes include sections known to be mineral in character at the date of the acceptance survey.

These reserved lands are not subject to location under the mining laws. Leases under the mineral leasing laws are permitted, however. Inquiries concerning the disposal of these lands and their resources should be addressed to the Territorial Commissioner of Lands, Anchorage, Alaska.

## **TIMBER AND MATERIALS**

### **Timber on public lands (43 CFR 79, 259)**

Timber on vacant unreserved public land may be sold at a reasonable stumpage value to individuals, associations, or corporations, for use in the Territory. Timber may also be sold for export from Alaska when in the judgment of the Secretary of the Interior, the supply of timber for local use will not be endangered thereby.

Timber may be obtained in limited amounts free of charge by individuals, churches, hospitals, and charitable institutions when actually needed by them for firewood, fencing, building, mining, prospecting, and domestic purposes. It may be obtained also by associations and corporations, not organized for profit, when used for other than commercial or industrial purposes or for resale.

Application forms for the purchase or free use of timber and information regarding the procedure necessary to obtain such timber may be procured from District Foresters and managers of the Land Offices at Anchorage and Fairbanks, or from BLM foresters located in the major settlement areas.

## **TIMBER IN NATIONAL FORESTS**

The two Alaskan national forests, the Tongass and the Chugach, are under the jurisdiction of the United States Forest Service. Inquiries relative to the cutting of timber in Tongass National Forest should be addressed to the Regional Forester, United States Forest Service, Juneau, or the headquarters of the Chugach National Forest at Anchorage, for information relating to the Chugach National Forest.

### **Materials (43 CFR Part 259)**

Mineral and vegetative materials such as common varieties of sand, stone, gravel, pumice, cinders, clay, timber and other forest products may be sold at not less than the appraised price. Free-use permits for these materials may be issued to any Federal, State, or Territorial agency or any association or corporation not organized for profit, for such material, for use other than for commercial or industrial purposes, or resale. Applications for sale or free use of materials should be submitted to the District Forestry Offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks, or McGrath.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Rights-of-way (43 CFR Parts 742 and 244)**

Rights-of-way may be granted on public lands in Alaska under certain conditions, for railroads, station and terminal grounds, tramways, reservoirs, ditches, canals, pipe lines, flumes, roads, telephone and telegraph lines, and plants for the generation of electrical energy, and for the transmission lines to convey such power. Applicants are required to submit detailed maps of the project and rental is charged.

No right-of-way is required over unappropriated public lands for access trails or roads unless an individual desires exclusive use. If such a road is built and has seen considerable use, the subsequent acquisition of land rights to an area traversed by the road does not ordinarily interfere with the builder's right to continue to use the road. Any road or trail constructed over public lands is open to use by the general public if not covered by a right-of-way permit. All construction of roads and trails must be done in such a way as to cause minimum damage to the land and its vegetative cover. An individual who through carelessness or poor construction practices destroys timber or forage or otherwise defaces public land will be subjected to trespass charges.

In Small Tract areas, easements are provided for public roads and utilities.

### **Townsites (43 CFR Part 80)**

There are various townsites in Alaska in which undisposed-of lots may be purchased at public or private sale. Some sales are made by the land office manager and some by a townsite trustee. Further information may be obtained from the manager.

### **Indian allotments (43 CFR Part 67)**

Allotments of surveyed or unsurveyed land in Alaska not to exceed 160 acres may be made to Indians, Aleuts, or Eskimos of full or mixed blood who reside in and are natives of the Territory. The managers will assist the applicants in the preparation of their papers.

### **Recreation and public purposes (43 CFR Part 254)**

Sale, grant or leasing of lands in Alaska for public and recreational purposes is authorized under a June 4, 1954 amendment to the Recreation Act of June 14, 1926.

The act is applicable to any public domain lands, surveyed or unsurveyed, except lands withdrawn or reserved for national forests, parks, monuments or wildlife refuges and lands set aside or held for Indian use or benefit.

Only the following are qualified to make application under the Act: Nonprofit associations, nonprofit corporations, and Federal and Territory of Alaska instrumentalities and political subdivisions including municipalities. Individuals are not eligible.



Applicants are restricted to patenting of not more than 640 acres in any one calendar year. Patent will not be issued, however, until the lands are surveyed. Minerals are reserved to the United States under the Act.

Sales or leases cannot be approved unless and until the lands applied for are first classified as being suitable for the intended use and not needed for any other public purpose or higher use. Lands for these uses are sold at prices which take into consideration the purpose for which the land will be used.

Application must be accompanied by statements fully describing the proposed use of the lands, showing that the application involves an established or definitely proposed project, and giving full details of the plan of development and the proposed disposition of any revenue derived from the project. Only such acreages as are required for the particular project can be sold or leased.

Where lands are leased under the Act, lessees are required to pay a reasonable rental based on the value of the lands.

Before a patent will be issued, the full purchase price must be paid. Rentals are paid annually and in advance. Leases are limited to 20

years but are renewable at the discretion of the authorized official. Leases are permissible in excess of 640 acres.

Minerals subject to the leasing laws and reserved to the United States in lands patented or leased, may be disposed of to any qualified person. Other minerals are not subject to disposition or to prospecting except by an authorized Federal Agency.

Lessees will not be permitted to cut timber from leased lands without prior permission.

## OTHER

In the previous sections, only the major types of use and disposal of the public domain were considered. In addition there are many other types including Soldiers' Additional Homesteads, Fur Farm Leases, Hot Spring Leases, Mission Sites, Reindeer Leases, Airport Leases, Air Navigation Sites, Special Land Use Permits, Color of Title, Phosphate and Oil Shale Leases, Potash and Sodium Permits and Leases, and Cemetery Sites. The Land Offices at Anchorage and Fairbanks should be contacted for information regarding these laws and regulations.

## DIRECTORY

More detailed information concerning specific subjects relating to Alaska may be secured upon request from the following sources:

### *Agricultural conditions*

Director, Office of Territories, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

General Manager, Alaska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, Palmer Alaska.

Territorial Commissioner of Agriculture, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Operations Supervisor, Box 480, Anchorage, Alaska.

Agricultural Experiment Station, Palmer, Alaska.

Soil Conservation Service, Box F, Palmer Alaska.

Agricultural Extension Service, College-Alaska.

Territorial Commissioner of Agriculture, Box 1828, Palmer, Alaska.

### *Fishery industry and wildlife resources*

Alaska Game Commission, Juneau, Alaska.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Juneau, Alaska.

Director, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior Washington 25, D. C.

Territorial Department of Fisheries, Alaska Office Building, Juneau, Alaska.

### *Forest resources*

Forest Service, Juneau, Alaska.

Operations Supervisor, Box 480, Anchorage Alaska.

### *General information concerning employment and living conditions*

Director, Office of Territories, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

Alaska Resource Development Board, Box 50, Juneau, Alaska.

Chambers of Commerce in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan and other Alaskan cities.

### *Mineral resources and mining industry*

Territorial Department of Mines, Juneau, Alaska.

Director, Geological Survey, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

Director, Bureau of Mines, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

Regional Director, Bureau of Mines, Box 560, Juneau, Alaska.

Regional Mining Supervisor, U. S. Geological Survey, Box 259, Anchorage, Alaska.

Operation Supervisor, Box 480, Anchorage, Alaska.

### *National parks, recreation, and tourist facilities*

Director, National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

Director, Office of Territories, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

General Manager, The Alaska Railroad, Anchorage, Alaska.

Alaska Visitors Association, Klein Bldg., Juneau, Alaska.

### *Bureau of Land Management Offices*

Area Administrator

Box 1481

Juneau, Alaska

Operations Supervisor

Box 480

Anchorage, Alaska

Anchorage Land Office

Box 1740

Anchorage, Alaska

Fairbanks Land Office

Box 110

Fairbanks, Alaska

District Forestry Office

Box 1050

Fairbanks, Alaska

District Forestry Office

Box 120

Anchorage, Alaska

District Forestry Office

Box 36

McGrath, Alaska

Juneau District Office

Box 2275

Juneau, Alaska

Bureau of Land Management  
Library  
Denver Service Center

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relative to the use and  
public lands and resources

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